2;Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

175 the natives into religious associations which facilitated the administrative and political functions of the colony.

797 *Cofradías* (brotherhoods) and *gremios* (societies) were organized under the
794 auspices and protection of a saint. A *mayordomo* and other officials were chosen from among the *principales* and loyal supporters of the Crown. The system of
[575] *cofradías* had the following functions: (1) it facilitated formation of other organizations, such as cults of particular saints; (2) it simplified the collection of religious taxes; (3) it supplemented local police and helped seek out delinquents, escaped slaves, and others; (4) it aided in the collection of tribute; and (5) it provided extra companies of troops in times of emergency.

[659] The church, united as it was with the state, became very strong. Church personnel were numerous and were paid from public funds. High public officials were obliged to preside over all religious processions and ceremonies. Religious fiestas, which greatly increased church income and stimulated local trade, became very numerous during the colonial period.

THE EPOCH OF INDEPENDENCE TO THE FALL OF THE DÍAZ REGIME

175 The first years of Mexican independence from Spain passed almost unnoticed
794 in Tepoztlán, where life changed very little. The church, aided by the guarantees
659 of the plan of Iguala, continued to be united with the new state without any major changes in its organization. As a matter of fact, after being liberated from the colonial tribute, Tepoztecans were subject to an even greater tribute by the church in the form of the forced collection of the *diezmo*, a tax whereby Tepoztecans had to pay one-tenth of their produce to the church.

The first great change in the religious life of Tepoztlán occurred during the reform period of Juárez, when church and state were separated and church property confiscated. Until this time the church in Tepoztlán, as in most of Mexico, was the institution that stood for the status quo. After Juárez, the church became an aggres-
[669] sive force struggling against the state and became involved in the so-called Wars of the Reform, fighting against the liberal orientation of the Mexican government. While we have little specific data for Tepoztlán on this point, it may be assumed that the village was also affected and that some Tepoztecans worked through church associations against the government while others participated in the liberal ranks of the victorious party of Benito Juárez. Later, during the struggle against the Emperor Maximilian, who was blessed by the Pope and had the aid of the
[648] church, we know that liberalism had penetrated into Tepoztlán, for one of Tepoztecan's sons, General Prisciliano Rodríguez, organized a column of Tepoztecans and fought heroically against invading French troops. The church had indeed lost much of its old power.

The economic revolution brought about by the amortization of the wealth of the church produced a new oligarchy which, under President Díaz, again delivered itself into the arms of the church. In Tepoztlán the new upper class, the

2;Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

caciques, united the church and state and supported the church as a strong conservative force. During this period the church recuperated much of its former glory and once more, pompous religious fiestas were celebrated in the village. The church, the *caciques*, and the merchants all benefited by the increase in religious activity. Attendance at fiestas was very large and public officials were present. As some of our informants said, "Formerly, the people participated in religious fiestas much more than today because they believed attendance was compulsory. No one dared to miss church after they had been visited by an official and told to attend."

Not only did the public attend religious ceremonies but they spent much money on fireworks, candles, music, flowers, and so forth. An informant compared present religious participation with that during the Díaz regime as follows:

> In the religious ceremonies it was common to have large processions which consisted in carrying the saints through the streets and all believers followed with their candles and prayers. Today we no longer burn artificial *juegos* as formerly. Today the citizens no longer sacrifice as much to make a good barrio fiesta. Formerly they had as many as three or four bands of dancers. Today only a few barrios send a band of dancers to the fiestas.

During the Díaz period, religious taxes were collected as they had been in colonial times, that is, by the *huehuechiques*, who went from house to house asking for the contribution. Today this custom is almost gone; *huehuechiques* function only in the barrios of Santa Cruz and San Sebastián.

Participation in fiestas was claimed as a public service by the local government. The president ordered citizens to do certain tasks or play certain roles on pain of fine or other punishment. For example, we were told of one president:

> He commissioned eight or ten men to go to the mountains of Acaloqua and Calencuahiuchuy, both distant from Tepoztlán, to cut palms for the celebration of Palm Sunday since these palms could not be obtained from nearby areas. The men were not paid for the work, which was considered very difficult. The *caciques* received the best palms so that they might march in the procession.

The president also named commissions to collect flowers and adorn the temple. On Holy Thursday the president appointed men to play the role of the Jews. These men had to provide themselves with special suits and a long cape and mask. They had to rise at 2:00 A.M. to collect the images for the procession. This role had been very unpopular during the colonial period, not only for what it symbolized but because the villagers shouted insults and even spat at them. However, later the symbolism was forgotten, and the "Jews" were invited into the homes of those who had the images to be collected and were given *champurrado* and *semita* to eat.

Despite the Constitution of 1857 which specifically imposed separation of state and church, there was much fusion of the two at the time of Díaz. In Tepoztlán the president and councilmen attended Mass and the *rosario* in a body on January first, and after receiving the blessings of God held the first session of the year. On Ash Wednesday again all the local officials, the judges, and their employees re-

2;Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

175 794 659 ceived the ashes together in a special place set aside in the church. The apportionment of the ashes was done in a hierarchal order for the entire population, first the high functionaries, next the *caciques* and their wives, then the assistant functionaries, and finally the townsmen. In another distribution, ashes were given to those from neighboring villages, then to individuals from more distant villages, and finally to all latecomers.

Despite the increased importance of the church at this time some Tepoztecans, without giving up their faith, had developed a critical attitude toward the church. While most remained passive and docile, by the time the Revolution began many Tepoztecans were ready to join the struggle against the church and state.

THE REVOLUTION

175 669 794 [659] The coming of the Mexican Revolution severely disrupted the religious life of Tepoztlán. The priest and the *caciques*, the strongest supporters of the church, fled for their lives and religious activity came to a standstill. The church and chapels were abandoned, the ancient monastery became troop headquarters and stables, and soldiers camped in the churchyard. Church and municipal archives were reduced to ashes, the sacred communion cups disappeared, cloaks were taken from the holy images to cover the wounded. For weeks at a time the local population had to live in the hills to avoid being killed. As an informant put it, "Who could think of religion in those days?"

After many bitter years peace was slowly established, and "since man cannot live without religion, for it makes him bad," once again the people began to think of the church.

789 773 In 1920, when the fighting was about over, an incident occurred which greatly stimulated religious life. At that time there was a drought in Tepoztlán and the surrounding area and the crops were severely threatened. In the same year, according to our informants, El Tepozteco returned to Tepoztlán. He appeared to a peasant from Yautepec who was on his way to Tepoztlán. The mythical figure no longer wore his ancient dress but was dressed as a humble peasant in white shirt and *calzones* and broad-brimmed Zapatista sombrero, and with a handkerchief tied around his neck in typical local fashion.

El Tepozteco spoke to the peasant, saying, "Go and tell my village that I am very angry because they have my mother (the Virgin of Natividad) naked and that is why I have not wanted it to rain. They must buy her a crown and a tunic of silk and satin and then I will send abundant rain."

Then he mysteriously disappeared and the man from Yautepec hurried to Tepoztlán to tell what had happened. When the news had spread through the village, some of the *mayordomos* of the old *cofradías* took it upon themselves to collect money to buy the clothing and adornment for the Virgin. A few days later, according to Tepoztecans, it began to rain and the crops were saved.

794 [793] [722] With the help of this incident the more pious people sought to re-establish the church and return to their former religious practices. The village priest, Padre Pedro